

In the claims:

Please amend the claims as follows:

- pl
- 1 1. (Previously Presented) A pre-assembled, freestanding
2 liftgate assembly, comprising:
3 a unitary frame, the unitary frame comprising an opposing
4 pair of side plates and an extension plate
5 extending between the side plates;
6 a hydraulically driven lift frame pivotally attached to
7 the side plates; and
8 a liftgate platform rotatably attached to the lift frame
9 and supported at one end only.
 - 1 2. (Previously Presented) The liftgate assembly of claim 1,
2 wherein the opposing pair of side plates are adapted to
3 secure the freestanding liftgate assembly to an underside
4 of a vehicle body.
 - 1 3. (Previously Presented) The liftgate assembly of claim 2,
2 wherein the opposing pair of side plates are bolted to
3 the underside of the vehicle body.
 - 1 4. (Previously Presented) The liftgate assembly of claim 1,
2 wherein the side plates in the unitary frame further
3 comprise formed steps.

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1 5 (Previously Presented) The liftgate assembly of claim 1,
2 further comprising a hydraulic pump mounted on the
3 unitary frame and coupled to the lift frame.

1 6. (Previously Presented) The liftgate assembly of claim 1,
2 further comprising impact bumpers attached to the unitary
3 frame.

1 7. (Previously Presented) The liftgate assembly of claim 1,
2 further comprising brackets attached to the side plates
3 in the unitary frame for mounting vehicle lights.

1 8. (Previously Presented) The liftgate assembly of claim 1,
2 wherein the lift frame further includes a lift frame tube
3 configured to function as an underride guard.

1 9. (Previously Presented) The liftgate assembly of claim 1,
2 wherein the liftgate includes at least one upper stacking
3 member and at least one lower stacking member, and
4 wherein a profile of the lower stacking member is
5 configured to nest with a profile of the upper stacking
6 member.

10. (Currently Amended) A vehicle ~~body~~ liftgate assembly
comprising a vehicle ~~body~~ and a liftgate secured to a the
vehicle, ~~body~~, the liftgate comprising:
a unitary frame, the unitary frame comprising an opposing
pair of side plates and an extension plate
extending between the side plates;
an actuator driven lift frame pivotally attached to the
side plates; and
a liftgate platform rotatably attached to the lift frame
and supported at one end only.

11. (Currently Amended) The vehicle ~~body~~ liftgate assembly of
claim 10, wherein:
the vehicle has a vehicle bed; and
N/A the liftgate is secured to the vehicle body by bolts.

12. (Currently Amended) The vehicle ~~body~~ liftgate assembly of
claim 10, wherein:
the vehicle ~~body assembly~~ includes a vehicle body and a
vehicle chassis; and
the unitary frame of the liftgate is attached to the
vehicle body and detached from a the vehicle
chassis.

13. (Currently Amended) The vehicle ~~body~~ liftgate assembly of
claim 10, wherein:
the vehicle ~~body~~ comprises a truck bed; and
the unitary frame is mounted substantially below a floor
of the truck bed.

1 14. (Previously Presented) The vehicle ~~body~~ liftgate assembly
2 of claim 13, wherein the extension plate is mounted in a
3 plane formed by the truck bed to provide a bridge from
4 the truck bed to the platform when the platform is
5 horizontally extended in the plane of the truck bed.

1 15. (Currently Amended) A liftgate, comprising:

- 2 (a) a unitary frame having an opposing pair of side
3 plates, a trunnion tube extending between the side
4 plates and an extension plate extending between the
5 side plates, wherein the side plates are adapted to
6 secure ~~to the structure~~ unitary frame to an
underside of a vehicle body;
7
8 (b) a lift frame having an opposing pair of
9 parallelogram linkages each having upper arms and
10 lower arms and proximal pivot members and distal
11 pivot members and a lift frame tube extending
12 between the lower arms, wherein the proximal pivot
13 members are secured to the trunnion tube;
14 (c) a liftgate platform rotatably attached to the
15 distal pivot members and supported at one end only;
16 (d) a stop mounted on each parallelogram linkage
17 adjacent the distal pivot member and configured to
18 prevent rotation of the liftgate platform away from
19 the upper and lower arms past a generally
20 horizontal orientation parallel with ~~the~~ a bed of
21 the vehicle body and configured to allow rotation
22 of the liftgate platform toward the upper and lower
23 arms to a generally vertical position perpendicular

24 with the bed of the vehicle body when in a lowered
25 position; and
26 (e) an extendable actuator pivotally secured at one end
27 to the trunnion tube and at ~~the other~~ another end
28 to the lift frame tube;
29 wherein, when the liftgate platform is rotated to a
30 horizontal orientation, extension of the actuator
31 raises the liftgate platform from a lowered
32 position to a raised position while maintaining the
33 horizontal orientation, and when the liftgate
34 platform is rotated to a vertical orientation,
35 extension of the actuator raises and inverts the
36 liftgate platform into a stowed position.

1 16. (Original) The liftgate of claim 15, wherein the side
2 plates are secured to at least one sub-structure cross
3 member of the vehicle body.

1 17. (Original) The liftgate of claim 15, wherein the
2 extension plate is secured to at least one horizontal
3 frame member of the vehicle body.

1 18. (Original) The liftgate of claim 15, wherein the side
2 plates and the extension plate are secured to the vehicle
3 body by bolts or welding.

1 19. (Original) The liftgate of claim 15, wherein the
2 extendable actuator is a hydraulic cylinder.

1 Claim 20 (Cancelled)

21. (Original) A method for providing a cantilever liftgate comprising the following steps:

- (a) providing a unitary frame comprising an opposing pair of side plates and an extension plate extending between the side plates;
- (b) pivotally attaching a lift frame to the side plates;
- (c) rotatably attaching a liftgate platform to the lift frame so that the platform is supported at one end only; and
- (d) securing the unitary frame to a vehicle body.

22. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~20~~ 21, further comprising, after steps (a), (b) and (c) have been completed, the step of shipping the liftgate to a customer.

23. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~20~~ 21, further comprising, after steps (a), (b) and (c) have been completed, the step of stacking the liftgate on top of another liftgate.

24. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~22~~ 23, further comprising the step of packaging and shipping the stacked liftgates together.

25. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~20~~ 21, wherein the step of securing the unitary frame to a vehicle body is accomplished by bolting or welding the unitary frame to the base of a truck bed.

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1 26. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~20~~ 21, further
2 comprising the step of attaching a motion limit member to
3 the pivot member of the lift frame to confine a motion of
4 the liftgate platform between a first orientation and a
5 second orientation substantially perpendicular to each
6 other.

1 27. (Currently Amended) A liftgate, comprising:
2 a unitary frame including an opposing pair of side plates
3 and an extension plate extending there between,
4 each of the side plates having an upper edge
5 adapted for attaching to an underside of a body;
6 a hydraulically driven lift frame pivotally attached to
7 the side plates of the unitary frame and having a
8 pivot member;
9 a platform having a first side rotatably attached to the
10 pivot member of the lift frame, the platform being
11 supported at the first side only; and
12 a motion limiting stop attached to the lift frame
13 adjacent the pivot member and configured to limit a
14 motion of the platform.

1 28. (Currently Amended) The liftgate of claim ~~26~~ 27, wherein
2 the upper edge of each side plate in the unitary frame is
3 adapted for attaching to the underside of a vehicle body.

1 29. (Currently Amended) The liftgate of claim ~~26~~ 27, further
2 comprising a plurality of bolts for bolting the upper
3 edges of the side plates in the unitary frame to the
4 underside of the body.

1 30. (Currently Amended) The liftgate of claim ~~26~~ 27, wherein
2 the side plates in the unitary frame further comprise
3 formed steps.

1 31. (Currently Amended) The liftgate of claim ~~26~~ 27, further
2 comprising a hydraulic pump mounted on the unitary frame
3 and coupled to the lift frame.

1 32. (Currently Amended) The liftgate of claim ~~26~~ 27, further
2 comprising impact bumpers attached to the unitary frame.

1 33. (Currently Amended) The liftgate of claim ~~26~~ 27, further
2 comprising brackets attached to the side plates in the
3 unitary frame for mounting vehicle lights.

1 34. (Currently Amended) The liftgate of claim ~~26~~ 27, wherein
2 the lift frame further includes a lift frame tube
3 configured to function as an underride guard.

1 35. (Currently Amended) The liftgate of claim ~~26~~ 27, wherein
2 the unitary frame further includes at least one upper
3 stacking member and at least one lower stacking member, a
4 profile of the lower stacking member being configured to
5 nest with a profile of the upper stacking member.

1 36. (Original) A vehicle body assembly including a vehicle
2 body and a cantilever liftgate, the cantilever liftgate
3 comprising:
4 a unitary frame comprising an opposing pair of side
5 plates and an extension plate extending there

6 between, the side plates having upper edges
7 attached to an underside of the vehicle body;
8 an actuator driven lift frame pivotally attached to the
9 side plates; and
10 a liftgate platform rotatably attached to the lift frame.

1 37. (Currently Amended) The vehicle body assembly of claim 35
2 36, wherein the upper edges of the side plates are
3 securely attached to the vehicle body by bolts.

1 38. (Currently Amended) The vehicle body assembly of claim 35
2 36, wherein the lift frame is configured to be attached
3 to the unitary frame prior to the upper edges of the side
4 plates being attached to the vehicle body.

1 39. (Currently Amended) The vehicle body assembly of claim 35
2 36, the cantilever liftgate further comprising a motion
3 limiting stop attached to the lift frame and configured
4 to limit a rotational motion of the liftgate platform.

1 40. (Currently Amended) The vehicle body assembly of claim 35
2 36, wherein the extension plate is substantially coplanar
3 with a floor of the vehicle body.

1 41. (Original) A cantilever liftgate for use with a vehicle
2 having a bed, comprising:
3 (a) a unitary frame having an opposing pair of side
4 plates, a trunnion tube and an extension plate
5 extending between the side plates, wherein the side
6 plates are secured to an underside structure of the
7 vehicle bed;

- 8 (b) a lift frame having an opposing pair of
9 parallelogram linkages, each having an upper and a
10 lower arms and a proximal pivot and a distal pivot
11 members, and a lift frame tube extending between
12 the lower arms, wherein the proximal pivot members
13 are secured to the trunnion tube;
14 (c) a liftgate platform rotatably attached to the
15 distal pivot members;
16 (d) a stop configured mounted on each parallelogram
17 linkage adjacent the distal pivot member to prevent
18 a rotation of the liftgate platform away from the
19 upper and lower arms past a first orientation
20 substantially parallel with the vehicle bed and
21 allowing a rotation of the liftgate platform toward
22 the upper and lower arms to a second orientation
23 substantially perpendicular to the vehicle bed; and
24 (e) an extendable actuator pivotally secured at one end
25 to the trunnion tube and at another end to the lift
26 frame tube, an extension of the actuator raising
27 the liftgate platform in the first orientation to a
28 raised position and inverting the liftgate platform
29 in the second orientation into a stowed position.

1 42. (Currently Amended) The cantilever liftgate of claim 40
2 41, wherein the side plates are secured to at least one
3 underside sub-structure cross member of the vehicle bed.

1 43. (Currently Amended) The cantilever liftgate of claim 40
2 41, wherein the extension plate is secured to at least
3 one horizontal frame member of the vehicle bed.

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1 44. (Currently Amended) The cantilever liftgate of claim 40
2 41, wherein the side plates and the extension plate are
3 secured to the vehicle bed by bolts or welding.

1 45. (Currently Amended) The cantilever liftgate of claim 40
2 41, wherein the extendable actuator includes a hydraulic
3 cylinder.

1 46. (Currently Amended) A method for providing a cantilever
2 liftgate, comprising the steps of:
3 (a) providing a unitary frame comprising an opposing
4 pair of side plates and an extension plate
5 extending between the side plates;
6 (b) pivotally attaching a lift frame to the side
7 plates; and
8 (c) rotatably attaching a liftgate platform to a pivot
9 member of the lift frame so that the platform is
10 supported at one end only; and
11 (d) attaching a motion limit member to the pivot member
12 of the lift frame.

1 47. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 45 46, further
2 comprising, after steps (a), (b), (c), and (d) have been
3 completed, the step of securing the unitary frame to an
4 underside of a vehicle body.

1 48. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 46 47, wherein
2 the step of securing the unitary frame to an underside of
3 a vehicle body includes bolting or welding the unitary
4 frame to a base of the truck bed.

01 1 49. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~45~~ 46, further
2 comprising, after steps (a), (b), (c), and (d) have been
3 completed, the step of stacking the cantilever liftgate
4 on top of another cantilever liftgate.

1 50. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~48~~ 49, further
2 comprising the step of packaging and shipping the stacked
3 cantilever liftgates together.

1 51. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~45~~ 46, wherein
2 the step of attaching a motion limit member to the pivot
3 member of the lift frame includes confining a motion of
4 the liftgate platform between a first orientation and a
5 second orientation substantially perpendicular to each
6 other.
